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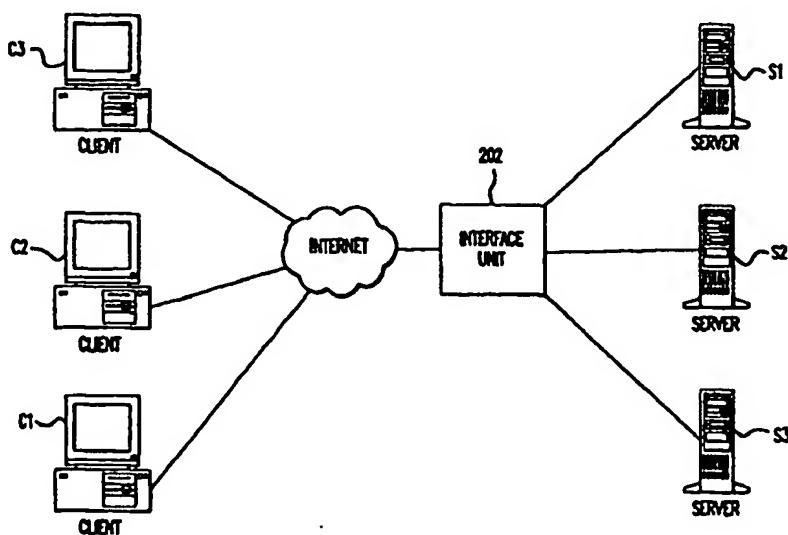
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(54) Title: INTERNET CLIENT-SERVER MULTIPLEXER



(57) Abstract

An apparatus, method and computer program product for network client server multiplexing. The apparatus is implemented within an interface unit (202) connecting a plurality of servers (s1, s2, s3) to the Internet, which is connected to a plurality of clients (c1, c2, c3). According to a "connection pooling" aspect of the invention, the interface unit (202) opens and maintains connections with the servers (s1, s2, s3) and handles the opening and closing of connections with clients (c1, c2, c3) accessing the servers, thereby freeing the servers of the processing load incurred by opening and closing connections. According to a "connection distribution" aspect of the invention, the interface unit examines the path names within requests received from clients and selects the server hosting the requested information according to the

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US99/26442

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G06F13/00, 17/00

US CL : 709/203, 217

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 709/203, 217

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,852,717 A (Bhide et al) 22 December 1998 col. 6, lines 46-68, fig. 6.	1-11, 20-30
Y, P	US 5,918,013 A (Mighdoll et al) 29 June 1999, col. 3, lines 15-68 - col. 15, lines 1-68	1-11, 20-30
Y	Zheng Wang et al. (Prefetching in world wide web), Department of computer science, University College London, United Kingdom, November 18-22, 1996, pages 28-32.	1-11, 20-30
Y	Mogul, J.C. (The case for persistent connection HTTP), Computer communication Review Conference Title: Comput. Commun. Rev. (USA), August 1995, vol. 25, no. 4, pages 299-313.	

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
B earlier document published on or after the international filing date	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
L document which may throw doubt on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reasons (as specified)	"Z"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
O document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	"A"	document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORTInternational application No.
PCT/US99/26442**Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)**

This international report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
1-11, 20-30

Remark on Protest

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
 No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.